

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 and 37 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-31 and 37 were rejected. Applicants have amended Claims 1, 10, 18, 27, and 37. Claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 19, and 22 have been cancelled without prejudice. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the present amendments and following remarks. The above amendments and following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the Outstanding Office Action. Upon entry of these amendments and consideration of these remarks, Applicants submit that all of the pending Claims will be allowable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 30, 37:

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 30, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Freerks. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

The Office Action states that it would have been obvious to provide the admitted prior art pin with the o-ring removal slot, as taught by Freerks, to simplify removal of the o-ring from the pin.

Applicants have amended each of the independent claims to include the limitation of the pin (sealing member in claims 18 and 27) being recessed within a housing. Neither Freerks nor the admitted prior art discloses or teaches a device that is recessed, wherein the o-ring is inaccessible for removal. The admitted prior art (p. 2, lines 16-23) states that "In known art quick disconnects, the distal end of the pin

extends beyond a housing of the connector, thereby leaving the pin and the o-ring exposed and prone to damage ...” Similarly, Freerks does not disclose a pin or sealing member that is recessed such that the o-ring is inaccessible for removal.

Although the prior art reference of Freerks discloses a small groove (50) to remove an o-ring from its groove, the o-ring in Freerks is accessible and the small groove (50) is needed to pry the o-ring from its groove due to the dove-tail configuration of the groove as shown in Figures 4a, 5, and 6. This small groove solves a different problem than the o-ring groove in the pending claims and thus it is inappropriate to rely on the Freerks reference. (See *In re Horn*, Horn, Horn, and Horn, 203 USPQ 969 (1979)). Additionally, the o-rings of the admitted prior art are also accessible, as the pin “extends beyond a housing of the connector ...” In contrast, the claimed o-ring removal slot is needed to access the o-ring because the o-ring is inaccessible, or recessed, within a connector or housing. The problem that is solved by the claimed invention is accessibility of the o-ring for removal, which is different from the problem of prying out an o-ring from a dove-tail groove in Freerks. Simply stated, the o-rings of the prior art are accessible, and the o-ring of the claimed invention is not accessible. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to provide the admitted prior art pin with the small groove of Freerks, and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7-10, 12-14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 30, and 37 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 12-14, 16, 17:

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 12-14, 16, and 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 30, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boisvert et al. in view of Freerks. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

As previously stated, Applicants have amended each of the independent claims to include the limitation of the pin (sealing member in claims 18 and 27) being recessed within a housing. Neither Freerks nor Boisvert et al. discloses or teaches a device that is recessed, wherein the o-ring is inaccessible for removal. Therefore, for at least the reasons described above in connection with the admitted prior art, it would not have been obvious to provide Boisvert et al. with the small groove of Freerks, and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 12-14, 16, and 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 30, and 37 be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 10, 11, 18, and 22:

Claims 1, 2, 10, 11, 18, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Almeras in view of Freerks. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

As previously stated, Applicants have amended each of the independent claims to include the limitation of the pin (sealing member in claims 18 and 27) being recessed within a housing. Neither Freerks nor Almeras discloses or teaches a device that is

recessed, wherein the o-ring is inaccessible for removal. Therefore, for at least the reasons described above in connection with the admitted prior art, it would not have been obvious to provide Almeras with the small groove of Freerks, and the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 10, 11, 18, and 22 be withdrawn.

Claims 24, 27, 28, 30, and 31:

Claims 24, 27, 28, 30, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mengle in view of Freerks. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 24, 27, 28, 30, and 31 distinguish over Mengle in view of Freerks for at least the reasons stated above in connection with the previous rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, and 17. Additionally, Claim 27 has been amended to include the limitation of the cylindrical surface being recessed within a housing. Therefore, the claimed embodiments as set forth in Claims 24, 27, 28, 30, and 31 are not obvious and Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 24, 27, 28, 30, and 31 be withdrawn.

Claim 26:

Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freerks. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 26 distinguishes over Freerks for at least the reasons stated above in connection with the previous rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, and 17. Therefore,

the claimed embodiment as set forth in Claim 26 is not obvious and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 26 be withdrawn.

Claim 21:

Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freerks in view of Nejad. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in light of the present amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 21 distinguishes over Freerks in view of Nejad for at least the reasons stated above in connection with the previous rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, and 17. Therefore, the claimed embodiment as set forth in Claim 21 is not obvious and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 21 be withdrawn.

Claims 6 and 15:

Claims 6 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Freerks, and further in view of Nejad.

Claims 6 and 15 distinguish over the admitted prior art in view of Freerks, and further in view of Nejad for at least the reasons stated above in connection with the previous rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, and 17, and also the rejection of Claim 21. Therefore, the claimed embodiments as set forth in Claims 6 and 15 are not obvious and Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 6 and 15 be withdrawn.

Claim 29:

Claim 29 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mengle in view of Freerks, and further in view of Nejad.

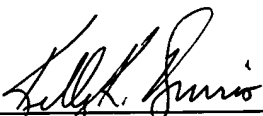
Claim 29 distinguishes over Mengle in view of Freerks, and further in view of Nejad for at least the reasons stated above in connection with the previous rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, and 17, and also the rejections of Claim 21, 6, and 15. Therefore, the claimed embodiment as set forth in Claim 29 is not obvious and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 29 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7524.

Respectfully submitted,

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